



NEW MEXICO ENERGY, MINERALS and NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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NM State Forester signs Agreement with NM Assoc. of Counties

Cooperative agreement paves way for better working relationship

(Santa Fe, NM) – New Mexico State Forester Arthur "Butch" Blazer and New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC) President Benito J. Martinez Jr. held a ceremony today, in recognition of a new partnership agreement between the NMAC and New Mexico State Forestry.

This cooperative agreement establishes a framework for the two entities to work collaboratively on projects and initiatives that are found to benefit the organizations' missions and objectives regarding forest and watershed health, wildfire prevention and protection and many more cooperative activities.

The agreement, signed today at the NMAC Annual Conference in Taos, New Mexico, will also work to improve communication and support among Forestry officials, the NMAC and counties regarding forested natural resources and community issues dealing with forested land or natural resources.

"The only way our forests and watershed will regain their health is through strong, effective partnerships like the one we're recognizing today," said Blazer. "Our relationship with the Association of Counties will only help us improve communities around the state and help us effectively implement the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Health Plan."

As part of the agreement, the NMAC Executive Director, Gustavo Cordova, will be able to assist New Mexico State Forestry in disseminating forest and watershed health information to counties. The NMAC will serve as a liaison for multi-county forest and watershed health projects and will assist in the development of methods for coordinating administration and financing of forestry-related work.

"We're pleased to have this agreement with State Forestry, said Martinez. "We feel it will help us create new economic development opportunities in our counties and help improve the safety and quality of life for all New Mexico citizens."

Additionally, the agreement calls for State Forestry and the NMAC to facilitate local, county, state and tribal cooperation in implementing land management policies and assist communities develop new means to maintain or improve their economic vitality and explore new training and education programs related to wildfire and forest and watershed health.

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